

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 501

By Crutchfield

A RESOLUTION to recognize and commend Ardena J. Garth for her honorable and astute service to the people of Tennessee as President of the Tennessee District Public Defenders Conference.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should salute those citizens who, through their extraordinary efforts, have distinguished themselves as community leaders of who we can all be proud; and

WHEREAS, one such noteworthy individual is Ardena J. Garth of Chattanooga who has served the citizens of Hamilton County with distinction as District Public Defender; and

WHEREAS, throughout her exemplary tenure as President of the Tennessee District Public Defenders Conference, Ms. Garth has distinguished herself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order and as an exceptional asset to this State; and

WHEREAS, a native of Chattanooga and the daughter of the late Reverend and Mrs. Nathaniel Garth, Jr., Ardena J. Garth attended Chattanooga and Hamilton County public schools and graduated as valedictorian of her class at Ooltewah High School; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Garth earned her Bachelor of Science degree from Middle Tennessee State University and her Doctor of Jurisprudence degree from the University of Kansas; and

WHEREAS, during her legal career, Andrea Garth has worked as an associate attorney with Hamilton County attorney Rheubin McGhee Taylor, been associated in the practice of law with Senator Ward Crutchfield, and operated a solo practice during which time she served as Assistant Attorney for Hamilton County; in 1987, she became the Assistant District Attorney/Special Prosecutor for Child Abuse Cases for Hamilton County; and

WHEREAS, on August 24, 1989, Ardena J. Garth was appointed by Governor Ned McWherter as the first District Public Defender for Hamilton County; she was elected to a full

eight-year term on August 2, 1990, becoming the first black female elected to a countywide office, and she won re-election in 1998 and 2006; and

WHEREAS, selflessly donating her time and sharing her legal knowledge, Ms. Garth has taught courses in constitutional law as an adjunct professor at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and served as an instructor in the Basic Trial Advocacy program for the Office of the Tennessee Attorney General; and

WHEREAS, highly respected for her keen insight and wisdom, Ardena Garth was a member of the Tennessee Indigent Defense Commission and the Commission on Ethic and Racial Fairness for the Tennessee Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, recognized as a leader by her peers and colleagues, Ardena Garth is currently the President of the Tennessee District Public Defenders Conference and a board member of the Board of Governors of the Tennessee Bar Association, the Chattanooga Regional History Museum, and the Bright School; and

WHEREAS, Ardena Garth is one of the three nominees of the Tennessee Bar Association for the Tennessee Judicial Evaluation Commission; and

WHEREAS, a graduate of the first class of Leadership Chattanooga, Ms. Garth is a member of the Junior League of Chattanooga and the Chattanooga Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to awards and accolades, Ms. Garth received the Unbought and Unbossed Award in 2006 from the Chattanooga Girls' Inc.; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Ardena Garth is a member of New United Church, which she has faithfully served in numerous capacities for many years; and

WHEREAS, Ardena Garth epitomizes the spirit and commitment that are characteristic of a true Tennessean; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Garth is most grateful for the love and companionship she shares with her husband, William Howard Hicks, Jr., and their children, Rachel Aurelia and Sarah Elizabeth Hicks; and

WHEREAS, throughout her estimable career, Ardena J. Garth has demonstrated the utmost professionalism, ability, and integrity, winning the unbridled respect and admiration of members of the bar and bench and her community alike; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend Ardena J. Garth for her meritorious service to the good people of Tennessee as the Hamilton County District Public Defender and as President of the Tennessee District Public Defenders Conference, and we extend to her our best wishes for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.